

STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, September 19, 2003

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas www.stripes.com

Saddam's defense minister surrenders

BY PATRICK QUINN
The Associated Press

TIKRIT, Iraq — Saddam Hussein's last defense minister surrendered Friday to an American commander, and U.S. troops backed by helicopters and armored vehicles fought an overnight battle near Tikrit after coming under a coordinated attack that killed three soldiers and wounded two.

Though Americans have been the targets of near-daily attacks, the battle in and around the village of Uja — Saddam's birthplace — was unusual because of its intensity and length. The fighting lasted from 8 p.m. Thursday until daybreak Friday, the military said.

The violence came as U.S. troops claimed a victory in

their effort to track down remnants of Saddam's regime. Former Gen. Sultan Hashim Ahmad, Iraq's last defense minister, surrendered after weeks of negotiations.

Bagistani said the American military had promised to remove Ahmad's name from the list of 55 most-wanted, meaning he would not face indefinite confinement and possible prosecution.

Ahmad, the eight of hearts in the deck of playing cards of Iraqi fugitives, was no. 27 on the most-wanted list. Thirty-eight of that group are now in custody and 14 remain at large.

The special treatment for Ahmad could be an effort to defuse the guerrilla-style attacks that are taking a toll on U.S. soldiers.

The Tikrit attacks were the most intense and coordinated since U.S. forces arrived in the area in April, according to Maj. Jocelyn Aberle, a spokeswoman for the 4th Infantry Division.

They began as soldiers were sealing off parts of Uja, about five miles south of Tikrit, to conduct a raid against Iraqi resistance cells. Gunmen in a white pickup opened fire on an observation post, followed by rocket and small arms fire on a patrol that killed the three Americans.

Insurgents also launched attacks against two bases on using rocket propelled grenades and heavy machine guns. The two wounded soldiers were listed in stable condition, said Col. James Hickey, commander of the division's 1st Brigade.



In this image made from video, former Iraqi Defense Minister Sultan Hashim Ahmed speaks at a news conference Tuesday, April 1, 2003, in Baghdad, Iraq. Ahmad surrendered Friday to an American commander.



KENT HARRIS/Stars and Stripes

Air Force Gen. Charles Wald, deputy commander of the U.S. European Command, watches airmen fold the Italian and American flags during a ceremony Friday at Aviano Air Base, Italy, honoring American servicemembers missing in action or taken prisoner in war.

Bases around Europe remember POW/MLAs

BY DAVID JOSAR
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — About 125 people attended a ceremony here Friday to mark POW/MIA Remembrance Day.

Community members laid several wreaths, listened to prayers and lit a candle at a table with an empty chair, which signified missing servicemembers. The ceremony was held in Washington Square on Patch Barracks, the headquarters for the U.S. European Command. The event was one of many being held throughout Europe on Friday.

"We must not lose our re-

solve," Air Force Gen. Charles Wald, EUCOM deputy commander, said during the ceremony in Stuttgart.

When Jessica Lynch, the Army private who fell into Iraqi hands during a bungled convoy run, was rescued, Wald noted, there was great enthusiasm and excitement.

That excitement was similar to when a towering statue of Saddam Hussein was toppled in Baghdad.

"That was about freedom," he said.

The ceremony, which began around 7 a.m., was organized by American Legion Stuttgart Post 6.

See POW/MIA on Page 2

On the battlefield: A digital revolution

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division deployed to Iraq are using more and more digital devices, capable of doing everything from tracking troops on the battlefield to compiling data.

The gadgetry includes a Commander's Digital Assistant, a handheld device that looks similar to a regular personal digital assistant encased in a steel box, and a Panasonic 34 Tough Book notebook that, again, looks blast proof.

If you think that's cool, you ain't seen nothin' yet.

Transportable digital devices are just the beginning of a battlefield revolution through 2006 under a program called "Land Warrior," said Maj. George Holguin. The next round of changes will start with a move to satellite data delivery that will offer such devices with broader bandwidth, for faster transmission and reception of large files.

By 2006, communications equipment may be integrated into complete fighting systems, giving U.S. troops a huge battlefield advantage, he said.

The 82nd Airborne is seeing the beginning of a technological revolution that may culminate in a battle kit that is more akin to what fans might see on the "Star Trek" TV series than to the current concept of a battle uniform.

For example, a soldier's Kevlar helmet will have a flexible screen showing him map points, voice recognition and even a super-hearing device that increases capabilities to 100 meters out, Holguin said. Yet, the device will muffle the report of a M-240B light machine gun in a fraction of a second, then instantly return the soldier's super-hearing capability.

The kit will have electronics that may even allow the soldier to blend into any background, making him virtually invisible to the enemy.

—Terry Boyd

POW/MIA

Continued from Page 1

The Post 6 commander, Fred Wildi, talked about the POW/MIA flag, which has a silhouette of a man and a guard tower. The flag is a reminder that there are thousands of American troops who have never returned from combat.

"The sweetness of enduring peace has always been tainted by personal sacrifice," he said.

The chair, candle and other items were to remind people about the POWs and MIAs, said Charles Craig, chaplain for the American Foreign Legion Post 6.

There was a red ribbon to signify the red ribbons people wear to remember service members who did not return from war. There was a single rose to mark the blood MIAs and POWs may have shed in battle or captivity. There was an inverted glass to note that the missing cannot toast with their friends.

And an American flag, Craig said, to remember the troops "who may have given the ultimate sacrifice."

Helping to organize the ceremony was the Air Force Sergeants Association Chapter 1697 and the Stuttgart Clan of Motorcycle Enthusiasts.

E-mail David Josar at: josard@mail.estripes.osd.mil

News tracker: What's new with old news

States

Slaying of priest: An inmate accused of slaying former priest John J. Geoghan in prison pleaded innocent to murder Friday, then left the Massachusetts courtroom screaming "Let's keep the kids safe!" and "Hold pedophiles accountable for their actions!"

Joseph L. Druce allegedly beat and strangled Geoghan in the defrocked priest's cell at Souza-Baronowski Correctional Institute in Shirley on Aug. 23.

Geoghan, 68, was serving a nine- to 10-year sentence for groping a 10-year-old boy and was accused of molesting nearly 150 boys over three decades. His case triggered the sex scandal that has rocked the United States' Roman Catholic Church.

Peltier seeks hearing: Attorneys for American Indian activist Leonard Peltier, 59, serving life for killing two FBI agents in South Dakota 28 years ago, asked a federal appeals court Friday to grant him a parole hearing he has sought since 1986.

Peltier's attorney, Barry Bachrach, said a decision by the U.S. Parole Commission denying a hearing until 2008 was based on the government's unproven claim that Peltier ambushed and executed the two men.

California recall: A federal appeals court announced Friday it will reconsider a three-judge panel's postponement of the Oct. 7 election, casting more uncertainty into the California recall campaign.

Without commenting on the merits, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said it would convene an 11-member panel to consider the timing of the vote on whether to recall Gov. Gray Davis. For the moment, Friday's action delays a likely appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

A date for the rehearing was not immediately announced.

The circuit judges will reconsider the decision by a three-judge panel of the San Francisco-based appeals court.

Pennsylvania mine accident: No criminal charges will be filed against anyone involved in the last year's Quecreek Mine accident, which trapped nine Pennsylvania coal miners underground for 78 hours, officials announced this week.

A yearlong investigation by a state-wide grand jury, working with federal investigators, found insufficient evidence that anyone involved in the permitting or operation of the Somerset County mine had acted recklessly or that they had knowingly or willfully violated safety standards.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Mike Fisher said the accident represented a "failure of regulation."

Business

Media name change: Hoping to leave the broken hopes of the Internet era behind, the world's largest media company is dropping "AOL" from its name, and will now be known simply as Time Warner Inc.

AOL Time Warner will revert back to the name it used before it merged with America Online in 2000 in a deal valued at the time at more than \$160 billion.

"We believe that our new name better reflects the portfolio of our valuable businesses," chairman and chief executive Richard Parsons said in a statement after the board approved the name change.

Britain takes on spam: Spammers beware.

Britain has announced that those sending unsolicited e-mail must get recipients' agreement in advance. Violators will be subject to fines of \$8,000 or more and possible lawsuits from those they've targeted.

The rule, aimed at shrinking the heavy traffic of junk e-mail messages, also applies to unsolicited text messages sent to mobile phones, the government said Thursday.

World

Swedish foreign minister's slaying: A Swedish court ruled Friday that the main suspect in the murder of Foreign Minister Anna Lindh can be detained for another week while investigators try to gather more evidence implicating him in her death.

The ruling came more than five hours after dignitaries from around the world honored Lindh as a diplomat without peer whose concern for democracy and equality showed no bounds.

More than 1,000 guests gathered inside the Stockholm City Hall for the 90-minute private memorial held by Lindh's Social Democratic Party.

Nazi trial: An 88-year-old former Nazi SS fighter collapsed Friday in a Germany court and was rushed to the hospital shortly after the start of his trial on charges he murdered a Dutch resistance fighter in 1944.

Dutch-born Hebertus Bikker was taken from the courtroom in this northern city minutes after telling the judge, "I don't feel well." Proceedings are now scheduled to continue Sept. 26.

Serial killer 'Serpent': The confessed killer known as the Serpent, accused of murdering dozens of tourists across Asia, was detained Friday for questioning in the deaths of two young women in 1975 in Nepal.

Charles Sobhraj, 59, was picked up at a casino in Katmandu about 4 a.m., police officer Keshav Badal said. He is expected to appear in court Monday.

Libya's UTA compensation: Libya has offered to pay \$1 million to each family who lost a loved one in a 1989 French airline bombing, but that sum is too low, the head of an association of terrorism victims involved in the settlement effort said Friday.

Six Libyans were convicted in absentia by a French court and sentenced to life in prison for the bombing of the UTA passenger plane, in which 170 people died.

N. Korea nuclear standoff: The 137-nation U.N. nuclear watchdog agency urged North Korea on Friday to scrap its atomic weapons program and agree to the resumption of international scrutiny of its activities.

In a resolution adopted by consensus, the general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency urged North Korea to "completely dismantle" its nuclear arms efforts.

From wire services

Hurricane Isabel blamed for 18 deaths

BY BOB LEWIS

The Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — Hurricane Isabel knocked out power to more than 4.5 million people as it weakened into a tropical storm and raced toward Canada on Friday after swamping tidal communities along the Chesapeake Bay, uprooting trees, disrupting air traffic and shutting down the nation's capital.

The massive storm was blamed for at least 18 deaths: nine in Virginia, three in North Carolina, two in Maryland and one each in Pennsylv-

vania, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island.

The storm plowed into North Carolina's Outer Banks on Thursday with winds of about 100 mph and moved across Virginia early Friday as its winds eased to around 40 mph — just above the 39 mph threshold for a tropical storm. The storm moved into Pennsylvania and was expected to sweep through western New York state before dissipating in Canada by Saturday.

Michael Brown, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said Isabel inflicted the worst damage along the Outer Banks.

"Our concern down there is we have about 4,000 people who refused to evacuate. We're getting in to make sure they're OK," he said on ABC's Good Morning America.

In Washington, the federal government shut down for two days.

Offices, monuments and subway tunnels were all but abandoned, frustrating tourists. Some were surprised that monuments and museums were closed Thursday, hours ahead of the storm.

"I think it's a little overkill," said Sandra de Dubovay, who

was visiting from the Los Angeles area. "Some people only have a day here. It is frustrating."

With mid-Atlantic states left sodden by an unusually wet summer, the winds toppled trees and rains flooded creeks and low-lying areas.

In Virginia alone, more than 1.5 million people lost power by late Thursday and more than 16,000 people filled evacuation shelters. Six people were killed in a pair of weather-related traffic accidents in the state; two were killed by falling trees.

One man drowned while canoeing.

Israel destroys Hamas bombers' homes

BY LARA SUKHTIAN

The Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Israeli troops blew up the West Bank homes of two Hamas suicide bombers Friday and searched a town for fugitives, as Yasser Arafat and leaders of his Fatah party started putting together a new Cabinet.

The Palestinian prime minister-designate, Ahmed Qureia, has given Arafat and Fatah considerable say over the composition of his government. Qureia has said he wants to avoid confrontations with Arafat that helped bring down his predecessor, Mahmoud Abbas.

Arafat's central role in forging the new governing team flew in the face of criticism from Israel and the United States, who charge that he is tainted by terrorism. Both na-

tions are boycotting Arafat and want him sidelined from involvement in diplomacy.

President Bush heaped fresh criticism on Arafat on Thursday.

Speaking at Camp David, Bush said Arafat "has failed as a leader" and accused him of forcing Abbas out.

"And the people of the Palestinian territory must understand if they want peace, they must have leadership who is absolutely 100 percent committed to fighting off terror," Bush said.

In other developments, Israeli troops in armored vehicles entered the town of Jenin and an adjacent refugee camp on Thursday, took over eight homes and conducted searches.

Early Friday, soldiers demolished the house of Shadi al-Tubasi, who blew himself up at a cafe in the Israeli port city of Haifa in March 2002, killing 15 Israelis.

Also Friday, Israeli troops went into Rantis, a village north of Ramallah, and destroyed the house of Iyhad Abed al-Kader Abu Salim, a Hamas member who killed 8 soldiers in a Sept. 9 suicide bombing at a bus stop south of Tel Aviv.

Palestinian police clashed Thursday with Hamas supporters in Gaza after Palestinian security arrested seven Hamas members in connection with the kidnapping of a police officer a day earlier.

Fifteen protesters were wounded, one seriously, and two Palestinian police were hurt by rocks, witnesses and hospital officials said.

Israel's renewed military activity in recent days in the West Bank and Gaza comes about a month after a unilateral truce called by militant groups in June collapsed in a spasm of violence.

Appeals court to reconsider recall ruling

BY DAVID KRAVETS

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — A federal appeals court announced Friday it will reconsider a three-judge panel's postponement of the Oct. 7 election, casting more uncertainty into the California recall campaign.

Without commenting on the merits, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said it would convene an 11-member panel to consider the timing of the vote on whether to recall Gov. Gray Davis. For the moment, Friday's action delays a likely appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Arguments in the rehearing were set for Monday afternoon.

The circuit judges will reconsider the decision by a three-judge panel of the San Francisco-based appeals court, which ruled unanimously that the October date must be delayed to avoid forcing voters in six counties to use outdated punch-card machines in the election to unseat Davis, a Democrat.

McCartney scuffle at Blaine stunt

LONDON — Illusionist David Blaine was not magic for Paul McCartney.

The former Beatle was involved in a shoving match when a photographer tried to take his picture near the London site of Blaine's latest stunt, an official said Friday.

The official, McCartney's spokesman Geoff Baker, said the former Beatle fired him when he learned that Baker had informed the pho-

tographer that the pop star would be visiting the site on the River Thames where Blaine is trying to live without food for 44 days while suspended from a crane in a plastic box.

Baker later said he had been reinstated, and described reports of a "fracas" as exaggerated.

The Evening Standard newspaper said its photographer, Kevin Wheal, claimed he was hit after trying to take McCartney's picture.

From The Associated Press

Man allegedly offered to kill Kobe accuser

BY ALEXANDRIA SAGE

The Associated Press

MONTEREY PARK, California — A Swiss bodybuilder who claims ties to organized crime was arrested for investigation of offering to murder the alleged victim in the Kobe Bryant sex assault case.

Patrick Graber, 31, agreed to carry out the killing for \$3 million, said Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca. He made the offer to Bryant's security director and met several times with undercover detectives before being arrested during a sting Thursday.

Graber, of the Los Angeles suburb of El Segundo, was identified by sheriff's officials as a well-built bodybuilding coach at a local gym. A Swiss national with an expired visa, Graber has been in the United States about two years, sheriff's Lt. Jim Taylor said.

Just before Thursday's arrest, Graber attempted to reach for a bag full of movie studio prop money in a car, Taylor said, after which he was surrounded by more than 30 officers.

Arraignment was set for Sept. 22.

The investigation started Sept. 8, after Bryant's security personnel said they had received a letter stating that the writer could solve Bryant's problems, the Sheriff's Department said.

A security official met with Graber and contacted investigators.

A meeting was arranged with Graber and undercover sheriff's detectives.

The detectives concluded that Graber was "a credible threat," Taylor said, and contacted the Eagle County, Colo., district attorney's office and the accuser's family.

"He had given us information specifically about the family that led us to believe he knew them quite well," Taylor said. "What he said about the victim and her family was true."

Randall, Hokies take down Aggies

BY HANK KURZ JR.

The Associated Press

BLACKSBURG, Va. — In his development as a starting quarterback, one of Bryan Randall's big challenges has been learning when to be patient in the pocket and when to pull the ball down and run like a tailback.

His ability to do the latter won No. 8 Virginia Tech a game Thursday night, producing the two biggest plays in the drive that proved critical in a 35-19 victory over Texas A&M.

First, on third-and-6 from the Aggies 26, Randall scrambled down the right sideline for 13 yards. Then, running

the option from the 12, he turned the left corner and scored, giving the Hokies (3-0) a 28-19 cushion.

"They both felt good," Randall said of the runs, the second of which capped an 11-play, 80-yard drive achieved completely on the ground.

"The first down was like a touchdown to me. It kept the drive alive and gave us new life, four more plays to try to get into the end zone."

For Texas A&M coach Dennis Franchione, whose own quarterback was dazzling for his elusiveness and his ability to escape pressure and make things happen, it was Randall

who allowed Virginia Tech to down the Aggies (2-1).

"The quarterback and his experience in pulling the ball down and making some things happen in the option, I think it was a little bit of an edge for them," Franchione said after Randall ran nine times for 59 yards.

He completed nine of 13 passes for just 63 yards and threw his first interception of the year to kill a drive, but performed when it mattered, despite Hurricane Isabel bringing steady rain and 40 mph winds.

"He makes good decisions," coach Frank Beamer said of Randall. "I've got a lot of faith that things are going to work out right with him."

Amputee back on field for San Jose State

BY GREG BEACHAM

The Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Neil Parry remained calm and collected as the quarters ticked by in his historic comeback game.

He didn't get a chance to play until the fourth, but the uncertainty didn't get him down — not after the preparation and training it took just to get on that sideline.

"I thought it would be a lit-

tle earlier, but ... it was kind of fitting," Parry said. "I mean, why not wait another three quarters?"

Nearly three years after Parry's lower right leg was amputated following a serious injury, Parry returned to San Jose State's special teams wearing a prosthetic right leg in the Spartans' 42-30 loss to Nevada.

Untold hours of hard work culminated in one play for

Parry — but now, he isn't satisfied by his amazing return as a blocker on the return unit.

That disappointing run was nearly a miracle for his fans, family members and an appreciative crowd.

His comeback required 25 operations, 15 prosthetic legs and a determination that awed everyone who knew him. Parry's dream came true when he joined quarterback Scott Rislov and defensive end Philip Perry as team captains for the pregame coin toss.

Scores/standings

American League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	94	58	.618	—
Boston	89	63	.586	5
Toronto	79	73	.520	15
Baltimore	68	83	.450	25 ½
Tampa Bay	60	92	.395	34
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	84	69	.549	—
Chicago	80	72	.526	3 ½
Kansas City	79	73	.520	4 ½
Cleveland	66	88	.429	18 ½
Detroit	38	114	.250	45 ½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Oakland	92	61	.601	—
Seattle	87	66	.569	5
Anaheim	72	81	.471	20
Texas	68	85	.444	24
Thursday's Games				
N.Y. Yankees 1, Baltimore 1, 5 in-				
nings, rain, tie				
Texas 2, Seattle 1, 10 innings				
Boston 4, Tampa Bay 3				
Toronto 10, Detroit 6				

Kansas City 3, Cleveland 2
Minnesota 5, Chicago White Sox 3

Friday's Games

Toronto at Baltimore, 7:05 p.m.
Boston at Cleveland, 7:05 p.m.
N.Y. Yankees at Tampa Bay, 7:15 p.m.
Detroit at Minnesota, 8:05 p.m.
Anaheim at Texas, 8:05 p.m.
Kansas City at Chicago White Sox, 8:05 p.m.
Seattle at Oakland, 10:05 p.m.

National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Atlanta	95	58	.621	—
Florida	84	68	.553	10 ½
Philadelphia	84	69	.549	11
Montreal	78	76	.506	17 ½
New York	63	89	.414	31 ½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	83	69	.546	—
Chicago	82	70	.539	1
St. Louis	79	75	.513	5
Pittsburgh	71	81	.467	12
Cincinnati	65	88	.425	18 ½

Milwaukee 65 88 .425 18 ½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-San Francisco	93	58	.616	—
Los Angeles	81	70	.536	12
Arizona	79	74	.516	15
Colorado	69	84	.451	25
San Diego	60	92	.395	33 ½
x-clinched division				
Thursday's Games				
Pittsburgh 7, Cincinnati 0				
Philadelphia 5, Florida 4				
Houston 6, Colorado 0				
San Diego 7, San Francisco 3				
Montreal 1, N.Y. Mets 0				
St. Louis 13, Milwaukee 0				
Los Angeles 2, Arizona 0				

Friday's Games

Chicago Cubs at Pittsburgh, 2, 5:05 p.m.
Cincinnati at Philadelphia, 7:05 p.m.
Montreal at N.Y. Mets, 7:10 p.m.
Florida at Atlanta, 7:35 p.m.
San Diego at Colorado, 8:05 p.m.
Arizona at Milwaukee, 8:05 p.m.
Houston at St. Louis, 8:10 p.m.
San Francisco at Los Angeles, 10:10 p.m.